

# Amateurs in Action

*Recounts of ham radio operators who have used their effort and skills to help others in a time of need*



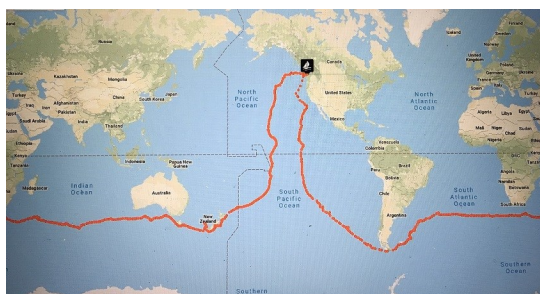
## A cry for help at sea



On 07 September 2022, Jeanne (Jan) Socrates, VEOJS/MM / KC2IOV, and her sailboat, the SV Nereida, set sail from Cape Flattery, the northwesternmost point of the contiguous US. She was on her way to visit friends in San Francisco, California, but 2 days of 35-knot winds and storms left her sailboat disabled and her onboard radio equipment marginally operational. Amateur operators in New Mexico, California, and Canada, and members of Group 7.155 heard her requests for assistance. In case you've not heard of Jan, at 81 years old, *she became the oldest woman to have ever sailed around the world unassisted* in September 2019.

Gil Gray, N2GG, was able to contact Socrates on 40 meters. *Her power was extremely low, and she was unable to communicate on 14.300 MHz to notify the monitoring group (Maritime Mobile Service Network) on that frequency*, said Gray. *She needed help with wind and sea conditions, and tidal data for San Francisco Bay*, he added. The low-power output on her HF radio made it very difficult to get a good copy. With the help of several operators in Utah, California, and Maui, they were able to piece together enough to understand her situation and answer questions for her navigation.

Gil, Jonathan Ayers AI6NA, and Edwin Jenkins K6EXY, are all experienced sailors. They were able to make periodic contact with Jan and give her updated wind reports. Their last contact was on Monday 12 September at 11:00 am. By this time, she was sailing with only the forward sail on her 38-foot sloop. Fortunately, a "following wind" kept her moving without a mainsail. As she approached the Golden Gate Bridge, Jan was able to use the tidal information passed on by amateur radio operators to make it safely to Berkeley Marina in San Francisco Bay.



*I wouldn't call it a rescue, said Jan, just good amateur radio assistance. And I'm grateful for their help. Once her sailboat is repaired, she said she'll set sail again. Not for records, but for the enjoyment of sailing the high seas.*

You can read more about Jan on [Wikipedia](#) and [her adventures page](#), and on [ARRL](#).